



Roasted Potatoes and Asparagus

Serve this side dish with your favorite meat.

1/2 cup Italian dressing
1/3 cup Dijon mustard
2 pounds small red potatoes, unpeeled, halved (about 1-inch pieces)
2 cups cut-up fresh or frozen Michigan asparagus
2 cups grape or cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1/3 cup sliced green onion

Combine Italian dressing and mustard until blended.

Toss 1/4 cup dressing mixture with potatoes in a medium bowl. Arrange potatoes on well sprayed 15 x 10 x 1-inch baking pan. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from oven; add asparagus to the pan. Continue to bake 10 to 15 minutes or until potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork and asparagus is lightly browned.

Put potatoes and asparagus in a large bowl. Stir in tomatoes, onion and remaining dressing mixture. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Makes 6 servings.

Michigan Asparagus Fresh and Now In-Season

Cream of Asparagus Soup

If you think you don't like asparagus, try this soup. It's good any time of year.

1 (14.5-ounce) can Michigan asparagus cuts and tips Milk
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules

Drain asparagus, reserving liquid. Add enough milk to liquid to measure 4 cups; set aside. Puree asparagus in food processor or electric blender; set aside.

Put butter and onions in a 3-quart saucepan; cook over medium heat until onions are soft, but not brown. Remove pan from heat. Stir in flour, salt and bouillon granules; stir until mixture is smooth. Add milk mixture and asparagus; stir to combine ingredients.

Return pan to medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture boils and thickens. Cook and stir 1 minute longer. Remove from heat; serve hot. Garnish with cooked asparagus spears, if desired.

Makes 5 (1-cup) servings.



Orange and Asparagus Salad

Quick and colorful, this salad appeals to kids and adults.

2 cups cut-up fresh or frozen Michigan asparagus
1 (6-ounce) bag spring or European lettuce mix
1 (11-ounce) can mandarin orange sections, well drained
1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
1/4 cup honey roasted cashews
1/2 cup raspberry vinaigrette dressing

Steam or microwave asparagus until tender-crisp. Drain and let cool. Combine cooked asparagus, lettuce, oranges, onion and cashews. Pour dressing over all. Toss to evenly coat. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

Note: 1 (14.5-ounce) can Michigan asparagus cuts and tips, well drained, can be substituted for fresh or frozen asparagus in this recipe. Heat asparagus for 1 to 2 minutes in a microwave before combining with cooked pasta.





Italian Beef Wrap

This is a healthy twist on a traditional sandwich.

- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1/4 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1 large (10 to 11 inch) flour tortilla
- 1 leaf romaine lettuce
- 2 thin slices Mozzarella, Cheddar or Provolone cheese
- 2 thin slices (about 2 ounces) shaved roast beef
- 2 large pieces prepared roasted red pepper, well drained
- 4 fresh or frozen Michigan asparagus spears, cooked

Combine mayonnaise and Italian seasoning. Spread over one side of flour tortilla. Layer lettuce, cheese and roast beef. Place red pepper pieces near center of roast beef. Top with asparagus. Roll up. Cut in half diagonally to serve.

Makes 1 serving.

Taste

Michigan Asparagus

Roasted Asparagus

Wash and trim fresh Michigan asparagus spears. Spread spears on a large rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle spears with olive oil and roll them around to coat lightly.

Roast medium-thick spears in a preheated 450 degree oven about 15 minutes; thin ones about 10 minutes, occasionally shaking the pan to roll them around for even browning. Test with a fork to determine how well done. Spears should be tender throughout and lightly browned, but no charred.

Variations: Add 2 to 3 cloves chopped garlic to the spears before roasting. Or drizzle with balsamic vinegar or lemon juice after roasting. Roasted asparagus is great combined with pasta or rice for side dishes or salads and is especially good on a vegetable pizza.



Chicken and Vegetable Stir-Fry

This entrée goes together fast for a flavorful family meal.

Chicken and Vegetables:

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1-1/4 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
- 1 large clove garlic, crushed
- 1-1/2 cups cut-up fresh or frozen Michigan asparagus
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1/2 cup sliced water chestnuts
- Hot cooked rice (optional)

Sauce:

- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1-1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon dark sesame oil
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper

For the Sauce, combine all ingredients in a small bowl; set aside.

For Chicken and Vegetables, heat oil in a large wok or skillet. Cook and stir chicken and garlic over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink. Remove chicken and garlic from pan; keep warm.

Add asparagus, carrots, green onions, mushrooms and water chestnuts to the pan. Cook and stir 5 to 7 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender.

Return chicken and garlic to pan. Add sauce. Cook and stir over medium heat until sauce reaches a boil and has thickened. Serve chicken and vegetable mixture over hot cooked rice, if desired.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

